



# CONVERGENCE

NZTRIO, HOROMONA HORO  
AND RICHARD NUNNS  
AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND



PHOTOGRAPHS: JONATHAN KING

# AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

FREE PROGRAMME

POST-CONCERT TALK

SUN 24 MAR

8.15PM, CONCERT CHAMBER

# CONVERGENCE

NZTRIO, HOROMONA HORO AND RICHARD NUNNS

CONCERT CHAMBER, AUCKLAND TOWN HALL

Sunday 24 March, 7.00pm

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## PROGRAMME

**Gareth Farr, Richard Nunn (NZ): *Nga Kete e Toru* for piano trio and taonga puoro**  
NZTrio, Horomona Horo and Richard Nunn

**Gao Ping (China/NZ): *Su Xie Si Ti (Four Sketches)* for piano trio**  
NZTrio

**Chen Yi (China/USA): *Tibetan Tunes***  
NZTrio

**Victoria Kelly—in collaboration with Horomona Horo, Tim Worrall & NZTrio (NZ):**  
***Toi Huarewa/Suspended Way* for piano trio and taonga puoro**  
NZTrio and Horomona Horo—World Premiere

## NZTRIO

**Justine Cormack** — Violin

**Ashley Brown** — Cello

**Sarah Watkins** — Piano

CONCERT WEAR BY WORLD

## TAONGA PUORO GUEST ARTISTS

Horomona Horo & Richard Nunn

[www.nztrio.com](http://www.nztrio.com)

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## PROGRAMME NOTES

### **Gareth Farr (NZ; b. 1968) and Richard Nunns (NZ; b. 1945): *Nga Kete e Toru***

*Nga Kete e Toru* was commissioned by NZTrio in 2009, and is a conversation between the instruments of Māori and Pākehā cultures. The original composition, for piano trio and taonga puoro player, features a group of traditional Māori instruments called the *Pūmotomoto* - instruments characterised by having only one finger hole resulting in a pitch range that is much more limited than other Māori wind instruments such as the *Koauau* and *Pūtorino*. The *Pūmotomoto* playing technique includes manipulation of embouchure (mouth position) to create edge tones, high harmonics, and bending of pitches.

For this performance, the work has been expanded to involve a second taonga puoro player incorporating a wider variety of taonga puoro that evoke other aspects and characters within the mythology of *Nga Kete e Toru*.

The seven sections of *Nga Kete e Toru* are inspired by various aspects of the story of Tane and his ascent to the heavens to acquire the three baskets of knowledge - *Nga Kete e Toru*. The *Pūmotomoto* is mentioned many times in the story, and as such it becomes a key character in the narrative of this epic journey.

### **Prelude - Te Ao**

The *Pūmotomoto Tawhirirangi* (Ostrich bone) is the soloist of the prelude, with the trio providing an atmospheric bed of string harmonics, resonant piano chords and textures. Just as the movement draws to a close, the *Pakuru Whakatangi Tanguru* (sticks) can be heard, signifying the insects that attack Tane on his ascent to the heavens, heralding the Battle of Whiro.

### **Movement 1 - The Battle with Whiro**

The spotlight turns to the trio for this movement, with battle calls from the *Pūtātara* (conch shell) and *Pūmotomoto Tutu* alternating with their tumultuous sounds in sharp bursts and staccato figurations. The *Tokere* (stones) are heard before the *Purerehua*, which evokes the wild winds that blow the attacking insects away from Tane.

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## MAJOR GRANTS



## Interlude - The Fontanelles

Briefly departing from the story of Tane, this movement focuses on another aspect of the *Pūmotomoto*. Featuring the *Pūmotomoto Ewe* (with its carving of the image of the foetus) it highlights the traditional use of the *Pūmotomoto* for imparting knowledge to the unborn child through the belly of the mother, and up until the fontanelles close after birth. The music is a variation of the Prelude. This section also features the *Hue Puruhau* (Gourd).

## Movement 2 - Nga Kete e Toru

The centrepiece of the work, this movement features the *Pūmotomoto Taroa* (albatross bone), the most melodically flexible of all the *Pūmotomoto*. Along with the *Putarino* (an instrument shaped and representing a Cocoon), both instruments play throughout the movement, weaving themselves in and out of the sinuous melodies of the violin, cello and piano.

## Interlude 2 - Tane

Once again, we visit the music of the Prelude in another incarnation - this time with the *Pūmotomoto Miro* and *Koauau Koura* (crayfish claw) as soloists - evoking the incantation of the god's blessing that allows Tane to approach the 12<sup>th</sup> heaven.

## Movement 3 - The Guardhouse of the 12th Heaven

The finale signifies the heroic success of Tane reaching the 12th heaven. The *Pūmotomoto Tawhirirangi* and *Putarino* alternate with the trio, as in the first movement. The *Koauau* appears again, before the *Pūmotomoto Tutu* returns to finally be joined by the *Pūmotomoto matai*.

## Postlude - Te Ao

The *Pūmotomoto Tutu* is played like a *Pūtātara* (conch shell) or *Pukaea* (wooden trumpet) into the resonating strings of the piano, and the *Pahu Pounamu* is struck.

## Gao Ping (China/NZ; b. 1970): *Su Xie Si Ti (Four Sketches)* - 2009

*The composer writes:* The work has 4 short movements each with a subtitle -

1. *Xiao (Boisterous)*
2. *Cuo Diao (Split Melody)*
3. *Dui Wei (Counterpoint)*
4. *Shuo (Shining)*

As the movements are short and concise, they possess one single mood, and often one single musical idea. They are like snapshots of moments in memory. In fact, some of them are indeed musical translations of scenes from my experience, for example, *Counterpoint* was inspired by seeing a village funeral procession in rural China. The family members of the deceased progressed slowly, interrupted by frequent kneeling down and crying (which can be both a

formal part of the ritual and an expression from the heart), while a band of very odd mixture of Western and Chinese instruments (such as a trombone and a Suona, a Chinese double-reed instrument) led the way by playing very upbeat happy music. It is not surprising as funerals in China are referred to as "the White Happiness", while weddings are the red counterparts. In my music, the two moods are in counterpoint creating a synthetic mood of the happy and sad. *Cuo Diao*, split melody, or wrong key, (Movement 3) is an isorhythmic love song in which notes in the tune are playfully replaced by 'wrong notes' which are not from the tune or its mode. These erroneous notes, however, later little by little form a transposition of the original tune in higher register.

*Su Xie Si Ti* was commissioned by the 2009 NZ Music Educator's Conference for NZTrio, through funds provided by Creative New Zealand.

### **Chen Yi (China; b. 1953): *Tibetan Tunes* (2007)**

*Du Mu*

*Dui Xie*

Commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University, the two-movement *Tibetan Tunes* was written for the New Pacific Trio and was premiered at the Conservatory of Music at University of the Pacific in January 2007 in Stockton, California. The first movement is inspired by the Tibetan folk tune "*Du Mu*," while the second movement "*Dui Xie*" is a kind of Tibetan folk ensemble music typically played with the plucked instrument Zhamunie, the bamboo flute, and the fiddle Erhu. Chen explains, "The music presents the rich gestures of Du Mu (a name of a god in Tibetan Buddhism) in a serene mood."

### **Victoria Kelly / in collaboration with Horomona Horo, Tim Worrall & NZTrio: *Toi Huarewa/Suspended Way***

*A way to reach the highest level of heaven - sometimes described as a web that hangs down from the heavens, sometimes described as a whirlwind path.*

When I began writing this piece, I wanted to create a musical world where Maori and Western musical tradition could communicate in the same language.

The Taonga Puoro are an aural tradition, deeply entwined with Maori culture and absolutely unique to Aotearoa and the Maori people. Western music, on the other hand, is a written tradition that encompasses the collision and intersection of many places and cultures.

I thought about the tangible things that these different traditions have in common and decided to create a myth to act as a musical form for the piece. Because Maori mythology is

fundamental to the art of the Taonga Puoro - and because many mythologies exist at the ancient heart of Western art - this felt like a familiar place for everyone.

As the music evolved and I learned more about the poetry and science of Te Ao Maori, I wanted to delve deeper. Horo is very generous with his knowledge, as the Trio are with theirs. I spent a lot of time talking with Tim Worrall about the concepts I was exploring and he too was an abundant source of knowledge and inspiration. But the more you learn, the more you realise you don't know... and it dawned on me that I wasn't composing alone and neither did I want to. It was clear that everyone else involved was fundamentally altering the course of the music and that - in a way - they were composing the piece too.

Unlike Western instruments, every instrument of the Taonga Puoro has a spiritual guardian (Kaitiaki) and a complex ancestral lineage (Whakapapa). The Kaitiaki are the Atua (Gods) of the materials from which the instruments are made. The whakapapa of each instrument is made up of its Atua and their descendants, the instrument maker and the performer, their iwi and ancestors, the place where the material for the instrument originated, the material itself... the tikanga of this musical tradition is a beautiful interweaving of spirituality and science.

As I've explored these ancestral links, I've come to imagine whakapapa as an almost infinite series of pathways that lead everyone and everything back to the place where we all began (the western parallel is evolutionary science). Whakapapa travels back, not only through people, but through animals, insects, plants, minerals and elements. The Taonga Puoro are made to vibrate and communicate along these pathways, transcending time and space.

This power also resides in the instruments of the Piano Trio, who can find their own Kaitiaki amongst the Atua of the materials from which they're made. Whether those guardians and ancestors are from Aotearoa, or the many other places from which Western culture is derived, the Violin, Cello and Piano connect us spiritually to our origins and to each other.

As the piece has continued to evolve, other themes have revealed themselves. The most important of these are concepts of transformation, illumination and, particularly, transition.

In Te Ao Maori, there is a state that exists between life and death, earth and sky, light and dark. It's the point where the spiritual and physical worlds intersect. As I've composed and my mind has wandered, I've drawn my own, personal comparisons between this idea and some of the beautiful theories about parallel universes and multiple dimensions that occupy the minds of physicists (and which have long fascinated me). This is a part of my own cultural heritage and it gives me chills to realise that many deep Maori concepts - derived centuries ago in geographical isolation - run parallel to Western thought, even if they are articulated quite differently on the surface.

These kinds of intersections - the doorways that connect us, the places where Te Arai (the Veil that separates us from our ancestors) is permeable - are where I imagine the mythical Toi Huarewa to manifest. These doorways lead to places full of mystery and wonder that all of us, regardless of our culture, can seek, access and perceive, if we choose to open them. Preceding this performance is a short film - made by Jonathan King - which documents some of the creative processes embodied in this work.

*To read the myth of Puiaki and Tawhiti, view the film again and discover more about this piece, go to [www.victoriakellymusic.com](http://www.victoriakellymusic.com)*

## **NZTrio**

Both versatile and genre-busting, **NZTrio** epitomises the relevance of live music in a digital age.

This group smashes preconceptions of classical music being stuffy and intimidating by engaging their listeners with intimate and dynamic performances.

Mixing musical cultures and genres, and often involving collaborations with a diverse range of

international artists, **NZTrio** inspires people of all

walks of life to see classical music, both old and new as relevant, essential and meaningful.

Celebrating their first decade together in 2012, violinist Justine Cormack, cellist Ashley Brown and pianist Sarah Watkins first joined forces in 2002 and were Ensemble in Residence at The University of Auckland from 2004-2009. From the outset their artistry, intensity and approachability have captivated music-lovers throughout New Zealand, Australia, Asia, South America, Turkey the US and the UK.

The trio actively commissions works by leading New Zealand composers making **NZTrio** a driving force in the New Zealand music industry. More recently, their commitment to commissioning new music has expanded to include composers from Asia and Australia.

Described as a 'national treasure', critical acclaim for the group's performances extends to their ever-expanding catalogue of recorded work.

Their CDs have each been nominated as a finalist for Best Classical Album at the NZ Music Awards. In 2013, the trio will release two significant CD projects - Stuart Greenbaum's chamber music, recorded at the Melbourne Recital Centre, and '*O Cambodia*', a collaboration with three Cambodian folk musicians featuring four new works by New Zealand and Cambodian composers.

NZTrio's role as one of New Zealand's premier musical ensembles has been recognised by Sustaining Partner Creative New Zealand through funding under the Arts Investments (Toi Uru Kahikatea) programme. Support funding is also received from ASB Community Trust, Auckland Council and the Chisholm Whitney Family Charitable Trust.





### **Horomona Horo – Taonga Puoro**

Mentored by tohunga, the late Dr Hirini Melbourne and Richard Nunns, Horomona Horo has devoted his adult life to the study and practice of the unique cultural and musical artform of *taonga puoro*. New Zealand's leading Maori composer and practitioner of the "singing treasures" Horomona won the inaugural concerto competition in 2001 and has since gone on to represent *Aotearoa* through Europe, Asia, South America and Oceania. He continues to collaborate across a variety of genres and with distinguished artists and composers both from his homeland and around the world.

### **Dr Richard Nunns QSM – Taonga Puoro**

Richard Nunns has been described as one of New Zealand's most remarkable musicians. A Pakeha (European New Zealander) who has become the living authority on Taonga Puoro -Maori traditional instruments.

Richard has developed an amazing international profile, both with the diversity of his recorded work, along with performing with a wide variety of people in many differing settings and circumstances. He works across a wide range of musical genres, and is continually in demand for recording. He is featured on a vast number of CD's.

Richard was awarded an honorary doctorate of music from Victoria University (2008); the QSM for services to Taonga Puoro (2009); an Arts Laureate (2009), was inducted into the New Zealand Music Hall of Fame with Hirini Melbourne (2009), received a Citation by the Lilburn Trust, for outstanding services to music (2007) a Citation for Services to New Zealand Music. by the Composers Association of New Zealand (2001) and *Te Whaiaa: Te Ku Te Whe Remixed* won Best Maori album (2008).

His most recent award is from the National Waiata Maori Music Awards September 2012 - Dr Richard Nunns and the late Dr Hirini Melbourne: Joint recipients of the Lifetime Contribution to Maori Music Award.





## **Gareth Farr**

Gareth Farr was born in Wellington, New Zealand. He studied composition and percussion performance at Auckland University, Victoria University of Wellington and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where his teachers included Samuel Adler and Christopher Rouse.

Farr's music is particularly influenced by his extensive study of percussion, both Western and non-Western. Rhythmic elements of his compositions can be linked to the complex and exciting rhythms of Raratongan log drum ensembles, Balinese gamelan and other percussion music of the Pacific Rim.

In addition to his music for the concert chamber, Farr has written music for dance, theatre and television. Farr received a NZ Arts Laureate Award in 2010. In 2006 Farr was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for his services to music and entertainment.

Onstage Farr also performs as his alter-ego, percussion-playing drag queen, Lilith Lacroix.

For more information, visit: [www.garethfarr.com](http://www.garethfarr.com) The music of Gareth Farr is published exclusively by Prometheus Editions: [www.promethean-editions.com](http://www.promethean-editions.com)



## **Gao Ping**

Gao Ping is a composer-pianist, born in Chengdu, Sichuan province of China. Gao was affected by China's concurrent transformation from a collective to a market economy.

This transitional phase between old and new - and the productive cultural clash between East and West - left traces that would later be evident in his music. The Beijing musicologist, Professor Li Xi-an has referred to Gao Ping as a leading member of the "sixth generation" of Chinese composers. In his most recent works, Gao returns to China as a creative theme. As a pianist, Gao Ping's repertoire is extensive; he has performed to acclaim all over the world. His pianistic proclivities and understanding of contemporary music have led Gao Ping to become sought after by living composers, including George Crumb and Frederic Rzewski.

In demand as a composer, he has received commissions and performances from musicians around the globe. Many prestigious venues have presented his work such as the Aspen Music Festival, Dresdener Musikfestspiele, and the Beijing-Modern International Music Festival.

Gao Ping's chamber music on Naxos label was described by a German critic as "music which wants to be heard with ears of a child, full of wonder and amazement.... deep and vulnerable." Gao was the recipient of the 2010 CANZ (Composers Association of NZ) Trust Fund Award.



## **Chen Yi**

Trained as a violinist in the European classical tradition, Chen Yi initially came into contact with Chinese folk music in a forced relocation to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. Already widely celebrated in China as a major new composer during the increasingly open cultural climate of the 1980s, Chen Yi came to the United States in 1986 to continue her musical studies. She writes both intimate and large scale works for

European and Chinese instruments, and fuses Western orchestral and choral idioms with traditional Eastern pentatonic tonalities. Her music has since been performed worldwide by orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic and Los Angeles Philharmonic, and by musicians such as Yehudi Menuhin and Yo-Yo Ma. She has residences in both New York and Missouri and, along with her composer husband, Zhou Long, she teaches at the University of Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance.



## **Victoria Kelly**

Victoria Kelly is a composer and musician. Her contemporary classical music has been commissioned, performed and recorded by many of New Zealand's leading performers and ensembles including NZTrio, the New Zealand String Quartet, Stroma and Michael Houstoun.

For her work in film and television, she has received numerous nominations and won two New Zealand Screen Awards. Films she has composed original music for include "Under the Mountain", "Out of the Blue" and "The Lovely Bones". Her most recent projects include working with Neil Finn on "Song of the Lonely Mountain" (written for the closing credits of "The Hobbit"), co-composing the music for the television series "The Almighty Johnsons" with Sean Donnelly, performing in her band 'The Bellbirds' with Don McGlashan, Sean Donnelly and Sandy Mill, and directing the music for the Opening Ceremony of the Rugby World Cup 2011.

## Jonathan King

Jonathan King is based in Wellington and makes films and comics. His feature film debut was 2007 comedy horror *Black Sheep*, about GE sheep run amok. He followed it with an adaptation of Maurice Gee children's classic *Under the Mountain*, starring Sam Neill. He plays guitar in Wellington band The Dickens.



## Tim Worrall Ngai Tuhoe

Tim Worrall is the Chairman of the Tauanui Marae in the Bay of Plenty and an esteemed Ta Moko artist, graphic designer, writer and director. Recently, he played an integral role as cultural and creative consultant for the Opening Ceremony for the Rugby World Cup 2011.

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